

March 7, 1984

LB 761

difficult to hear and we owe respect to the one speaking. Thank you, Senator Marsh.

SENATOR MARSH: Thank you, sir. Nebraska is one of only two states which has no provision for the practice of certified nurse midwives. The other state is North Dakota. This bill provides that a nurse with experience in labor and delivery room must return to school for the graduate education in the field of nurse midwifery. There are twenty-five licensed facilities in the United States. There is none in the State of Nebraska. After successfully completing the educational requirements and passing a national board, then the nurse midwife makes application to be licensed in our state or the state of that nurse midwife's choice. There are men and women in this field although it is predominately women in the field of nurse midwifery. This bill, its concept had an indepth summer study under the Public Health and Welfare Committee. It had an extensive public hearing and has had input from many different health professional groups in the process of coming with the present bill which is before us. It mandates that the physician who is working with the nurse midwife must have obstetrics in the regular practice of the physician. It very clearly delineates that home births are not part of the protocol. It carefully spells out the practice agreement that must be okayed, must be adopted, must be carefully looked at by two different groups, the Board of Nursing and the Board of Examiners. It also spells out that if there is a change that it again must go back and be reagreed with with not only the physician and the nurse midwife but the Examining Boards as well, the Examining Board and the Board of Nursing. It is a mechanism which will not overnight have many nurse midwives in our state. I think this body is aware that we have four practicing nurse midwives who are military officers assigned to Offutt Air Force Base Hospital. The military has used nurse midwives for many years very successfully. Their health statistics are extremely good and a nurse midwife manages a normal procedure, a normal delivery, and the preventing of complications by close monitoring. Certified nurse midwives have an outstanding record of lowering infant and maternal mortality rates and the avoidance of caesarean births. I would like to point out, however, that the national